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17 Fifth Avenue
Waterford, CT 06385
May 20, 1975

Dr. Joshua Lederberg, Chairman
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Dr. Lederberg,

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I would like to introduce myself to you via this letter. My name is Mark Weidenbaum. I have been interested in your work for some time and had mentioned this to my father quite a while ago. I understand that he knew you when you were in college and that he contacted you with regard to the possibility of my obtaining a summer job in your laboratories. I also understand that via phone you indicated that this would not be feasible because it would take at least the summer period to learn the techniques needed to contribute to your laboratory program, and by then it would be time for me to return to the University of Connecticut. My father told me that you suggested the possibility of my taking courses in the University Summer Session at Stanford. You kindly indicated that if I were at Stanford you would be willing to talk with me concerning your work. Since that time I have looked through the Summer Session Bulletin carefully.

I still want very much to somehow get to know more about the work that you have done and are doing. Since it would not be possible to get a job with you I have come up with what I hope would be acceptable to you. I notice that the summer session bulletin lists under MEDICINE (p. 92) a Genetics 260 course entitled "Supervised Study: Special Topics". Therefore, I would like to take Genetics 260 for 8 credits (which is the minimum allowed for undergraduates) with you as my advisor. This would not involve any commitment as to working in your laboratories but it would enable me to select a project which would be within my capabilities and related to the

WEIDENBAUM, MARK

area of work which you are doing. I realize that I have a very limited background but I would try to learn whatever material was necessary so that during the eight week summer session (June 24 to August 16) I could better get to know your work and make some kind of a contribution. However, I feel that I do want to take on this challenge. If you will permit it, it will be an extremely worthwhile experience for me.

I have asked a pathologist (M.D.) at Lawrence and Memorial Hospital in New London, Conn. under whose direction I worked on an original research project entitled "NEW INTERFERENCE CONTRAST TECHNIQUES FOR STUDYING NERVE FIBERS IN HUMAN BRAIN TISSUE", to send you a letter of reference. Also, I am enclosing an abstract of this work.

My brief experiences with research work while in high school revealed clearly that there were huge gaps in my background when I began the project. More importantly, these experiences proved to me that I could rapidly fill these gaps. Last summer I found that I was able to learn an entire semester of college Physics in three weeks. Now, with two intensive years of grounding in the basic sciences and mathematics behind me, I am confident that I could learn enough of one aspect of your work to do a meaningful, although limited, supervised study.

With regard to my tentative summer program, I would like to study some of the important papers that came out of the recent conference in Asilomar. In particular, I would like to investigate the potentialities of transplanting bits of disease resistant human DNA into common bacteria in order to colonize large quantities of hybrid bacteria. I would like to see how and where chemical principles are involved in this work since I am a Chemistry major at the University of Connecticut, and am interested in the structure of molecules related to biological functions.

I have just finished an intensive year of Honors Organic Chemistry, a course heavily geared to the theoretical aspects of structure, mechanisms, and synthesis, at the University of Connecticut. This course was accompanied by a full year of Honors Organic Chemistry Laboratory including nearly two months devoted to original synthesis. I have also completed intensive courses in Physics and Advanced Calculus. Should you wish any references or other material I would be happy to have them sent to you immediately.

It is necessary for me to make a decision on my summer plans very soon. I consider this program to be my number one choice. I hope that you will be willing to let me register for such a program. Since I must make the necessary financial preparations, I plan to call you very soon to find out whether this plan is acceptable to you. I hope you will consider this request favorably.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Weidenbaum

Mark Weidenbaum

P.S.

Please feel free to contact the following people for further references:

- (1) Dr. W.R. Vaughan
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